

REMARKS / ARGUMENTS

Reconsideration of the application is requested.

Claims 1 and 3-5 remain in the application. Claims 1 and 4-5 have been amended. Claim 2 has been withdrawn.

The Examiner has stated in item 1 on page 2 of the above-mentioned Office action that Applicants have not filed a certified copy of the German application as required by 35 U.S.C. 119(b). However, it is noted that a certified copy of the German Patent Application 100 05 633.4 has been filed together with a Claim for Priority on February 9, 2001. A copy of the Claim for Priority, the first page of the certified copy of the German Patent Application 100 05 633.4 as well as the return-receipt postcard, are enclosed herewith.

In item 3 on pages 2-3 of the above-mentioned Office action, claims 1 and 3-4 have been rejected as being anticipated by Simon (US Pat. No. 4,915,677) under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b).

In item 4 on page 3 of the above-mentioned Office action, claim 5 has been rejected as being anticipated by Rattunde (US Pat. No. 4,631,042) under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b).

In item 6 on pages 3-5 of the above-mentioned Office action, claims 1 and 3-4 have been rejected as being unpatentable over Hofmann et al. (US Pat. No. 6,250,224 B1) in view of Simon under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a).

In item 7 on pages 5-6 of the above-mentioned Office action, claim 5 has been rejected as being unpatentable over Hofmann in view of Rattunde under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a).

The rejections have been noted and claims 1 and 4-5 have been amended in an effort to even more clearly define the invention of the instant application. Support for the changes is found on page 12, line 15 of the specification as well as Fig. 4 (positions 28'.1 and 28''.1) of the drawings.

Before discussing the prior art in detail, it is believed that a brief review of the invention as claimed, would be helpful.

Claims 1 and 4-5 call for, inter alia:

said shaped surfaces being concavely curved surfaces.

(Emphasis added.)

None of the cited references discloses shaped surfaces being concavely curved surfaces. In Simon, the stops have inclined but straight surfaces (slanted ends of P1, P2). Rattunde

actually teaches away from the invention of the instant application because in Rattunde the surfaces of the stops are spherically, namely convexly but not concavely, bent (see lines 4-5 of the abstract of Rattunde). Hofmann et al. do not disclose shaped surfaces at all (see the second paragraph on page 4 of the Office action).

Clearly, none of the cited references shows "said shaped surfaces being concavely curved surfaces," as recited in claims 1 and 4-5 of the instant application.

Claims 1 and 4-5 are, therefore, believed to be patentable over the art and since claim 3 is dependent on claim 1, it is believed to be patentable as well.

In view of the foregoing, reconsideration and allowance of claims 1 and 3-5 are solicited.

In the event the Examiner should still find any of the claims to be unpatentable, counsel would appreciate a telephone call so that, if possible, patentable language can be worked out.

In the alternative, the entry of the amendment is requested as it is believed to place the application in better condition for appeal, without requiring extension of the field of search.

If an extension of time for this paper is required, petition for extension is herewith made. Please charge any fees which might be due with respect to 37 CFR Sections 1.16 and 1.17 to the Deposit Account of Lerner and Greenberg, P.A., No. 12-1099.

Respectfully submitted,

LAURENCE A. GREENBERG
REG. NO. 29,308



For Applicants

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Lerner and Greenberg, P.A.
Post Office Box 2480
Hollywood, FL 33022-2480
Tel: (954) 925-1100
Fax: (954) 925-1101